



News Release

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CDC confirms nine Washington swine flu cases positive for new H1N1 strain

All nine people recovering, local health officials say

OLYMPIA — Federal health officials have confirmed suspected swine flu (H1N1) cases in Washington, which joins 38 other states that have confirmed cases. Nine people in our state have been confirmed with swine flu — seven in King; one each in Snohomish and Spokane Counties.

“These nine confirmed swine flu cases are the first for Washington since the outbreak began,” said Governor Chris Gregoire. “I have directed Secretary of Health Mary Selecky to continue her agency’s efforts of identifying and preventing swine flu in Washington. And I urge everyone in our state to continue to take everyday precautions as you would for seasonal flu.”

According to Secretary Selecky, “The CDC tells us 99 percent of probable samples tested are confirmed positive, so this is no surprise,” Selecky said. “As the disease investigation progresses, it appears this new flu strain is similar to seasonal flu in symptoms, treatment, and spread.”

State health officials are working closely with local health partners and the CDC to respond to the outbreak, track the spread of the disease, and develop prevention strategies. According to local health officials, the nine people who are confirmed cases are all recovering. The state labs continue to receive samples from local health for testing, and more confirmed cases are likely.

“We expect most of the probable cases in our state to be confirmed, as they have in other states,” said Selecky. “We’ve been learning every day as we respond to this new strain of influenza, and we’re adjusting strategy as we go. For example, many local health leaders have adjusted their policies on reducing exposures in schools, asking anyone with symptoms of respiratory illness to stay home rather than closing an entire school.”

Symptoms of swine flu are similar to seasonal flu symptoms: fever, muscle aches, cough, and sometimes trouble breathing. It's important for people who are sick with flu-like symptoms to stay home or go to a health care provider if they become seriously ill. The best thing people in our state can do is to pay attention to their own health. If their children are sick, keep them out of school or day care until they're well.

Detailed information about this outbreak is available on the Department of Health [swine flu update Web site](http://www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/default.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/default.htm). The agency's swine flu information telephone line, 1-888-703-4364, provides prevention advice in English and Spanish. The [federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/index.htm) (www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/index.htm) has the latest information on the national disease investigation.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Governor Gregoire and Secretary Selecky will be available at the governor's bill signing to take media questions at 1:30 P.M. in the governor's conference room.

Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at http://www.doh.wa.gov for <i>a healthy dose of information</i> .
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